



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 117th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 167

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MAY 26, 2021

No. 92

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, May 28, 2021, at 10 a.m.

Senate

WEDNESDAY, MAY 26, 2021

The Senate met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TINA SMITH, a Senator from the State of Minnesota.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, we boast of Your power and magnify Your Name. Although our Nation is beset with dangers, You remain our strong fortress.

Lord, give our lawmakers the wisdom to seek Your solutions to the great problems they face. Remind them that more than human ingenuity is needed. May our Senators prove Your promises by faithfully and patiently trusting in the unfolding of Your prevailing providence. Give them a passion to turn from evil as they seek to glorify Your Name. Remind them that though the righteous face many troubles, You deliver them from them all.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication

to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,

Washington, DC, Wednesday, May 26, 2021.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable TINA SMITH, a Senator from the State of Minnesota, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Ms. SMITH thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJÁN). The Democratic leader is recognized.

REMEMBERING JOHN WARNER

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, we were greeted this morning by some very sad news, that our former colleague Senator John Warner of Virginia had passed away at the age of 94.

A five-term Senator, he was a consummate public servant, a consensus builder, an authority on military affairs—one of the last World War II veterans to serve in this Chamber. And he

actually interrupted his law school studies to join the Marine Corps during the Korean war. The kind of stature that he had, his great, great reaching across the aisle in bipartisanship is something this Chamber misses, and we miss him.

At my request, the flags around the Senate side of the U.S. Capitol will be lowered to half-staff in his honor.

On behalf of the Senate, I want to express our condolences to his family and his friends and our gratitude for his amazing service to America throughout his life.

ENDLESS FRONTIER ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Now, Mr. President, on the competition act, the Senate today will continue work on the bipartisan U.S. Innovation and Competition Act, legislation that will supercharge American innovation and preserve our competitive edge, not just for the next few years but for generations to come. It will be true that our children and even our grandchildren will benefit from this legislation.

Right now, this legislation doesn't get the big focus of the press—A, because it is bipartisan; there aren't too many clashes; B, because it is positive; and, C, because it is long term. It won't have an immediate effect tomorrow, but it will have a profound effect 3, 4, 5 years from now and generations after.

So it is really important legislation. I think it is one of the most important things this Chamber has done in a very long time. And the hallmark of the bill has been its bipartisanship. It pulls together bipartisan legislation from no

• This “buller” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

S3467

fewer than six Senate committees and includes the input of nearly every Member of the Senate. The vote tallies you are seeing on this bill are from another era, maybe the John Warner era—24 to 4 in the Commerce Committee, 21 to 1 in Foreign Relations. The Senate, as a whole, voted to proceed to the bill by 86 to 11.

And the process here on the floor is no less bipartisan. I have heard it from Members on both sides of the aisle: Let's try to do regular order. Let's get on the floor and do amendments the way we used to.

Well, we are doing just that. We have already considered 10 amendments—more than I can remember in a long time—8 of which were led by Republicans. So it is hardly that the Democratic majority is only doing what we want. Three Republican amendments were adopted by voice vote last night. I mean, who would have ever thought that the Senate would adopt an amendment from Senator RAND PAUL by voice vote? We did it.

So, look, we are moving forward in a very bipartisan way. We will consider at least another three amendments of the bill today, and if both sides continue in good faith to schedule amendment votes and debate, and there are no eleventh-hour decisions to delay or obstruct, there is no reason we can't finish this bill by the end of the week. That is my intention.

Taking a step back, the depth of bipartisanship on this bill reveals two things. One, Members want to work together if given a chance. This bill came through the regular order. Senate committees drove the process, and here on the floor, Members have participated in robust debate and a robust amendment process. But, second, and maybe even more importantly, it reveals that Democrats and Republicans are united in our efforts to preserve and maintain American leadership on the world stage.

We all know that investing in sciences, innovation, and technology holds the key to our future—the key. It has been one of the great hallmarks of America from 1950 on, maybe even earlier, from Thomas Edison on, maybe even earlier than that. But today—today—we have let that lag. We became far too complacent. The United States commits less than 1 percent of its GDP toward basic science research—1 percent. That is the fault of government, but it is also the fault of the private sector. The world is so competitive, and global competition is so severe. Companies feel they can't invest as much in the kind of research that might payoff profits 5 or 10 years down the road.

So while all this is happening, the Chinese Communist Party spends nearly 2.5 percent on research and has pledged to the world that they will increase scientific investments by 10 percent in the future. If that happens unchallenged, the days of America leading the world in science and innova-

tion, the days of America being the leading economic power of the world will be over, and we will regret it and look back 10 or 20 years from now and say: Why the heck didn't we do this? It was so simple and easy.

But we have to.

I heard my friend from Illinois, Senator DURBIN, say that in 1990, the United States produced 37 percent of the world's semiconductors—a technology we invented. Today, we produce less than 12 percent, and it is going down. Some have predicted—many have predicted—that at this rate, we will produce less than 6 percent of them a few years from now. If we don't step up our game right now, we will fall behind the rest of the world.

That is what this legislation is ultimately about—righting the ship, investing in science and tech, so we can outinnovate, outproduce, and outcompete the world in the industries of the future, some of which we know and some of which we don't even know, but we know that scientific investment will produce them. And if we are at the forefront of this, we will have America continue to be the leader in these new technologies yet unimagined.

Around the globe, authoritarian governments smell blood in the water. They believe that squabbling democracies like ours can't come together and invest in national priorities the way a top-down, centralized, and authoritarian government can. They are rooting for us to fail so they can grab the mantle of global economic leadership and own innovations that will define the next century. We cannot—we cannot—we must not let that happen. I do not believe we will let it happen.

The bipartisan—the strongly bipartisan—work on this competition bill has revealed that in this Chamber we still believe—Democrats and Republicans alike, united and moving forward—that another American century lies on the horizon.

Let's move forward. Let's finish our work and pass the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act as soon as possible, certainly before the end of the month this week.

JANUARY 6 COMMISSION

Mr. SCHUMER. On another matter, the January 6 Commission. Last night, I filed cloture on the House-passed legislation to create an independent Commission and report on the events of January 6.

There is an obvious and urgent need to establish such a Commission. What happened on January 6 was a travesty, the culmination of months of deliberate lies about our elections, propagated by the former President, a dishonest man, and his allies.

The Capitol was breached for the first time since the War of 1812. Capitol Police officers were brutalized. One was killed in the attack. I shouldn't need to remind this Chamber of the scene on January 6. We were all there.

At one point, I was within 20 feet of these White supremacist hooligans.

That day continues to haunt us. Faith in our elections, in our democracy has nosedived. Listen to this. In a variety of polls, more than half of the Republican Party believes the election was rigged and Joe Biden isn't the real President. That is a flashing red warning sign for our democracy. If the American people, if a large chunk of them believe the Big Lie, if the majority of Americans believe that our elections are not on the level, we are on the road to ruin. This grand, beautiful, wonderful, several-century-old democracy could teeter when people don't believe it is fair, when people don't believe the elections are on the level.

All the fighting in the past, all the internecine fighting—I can't remember a moment in history where people doubted the veracity of our elections. They may not have liked the outcome, but they believed they were on the level. We stop believing that and, believe me, it will spread. One side will feel that way one day and then the other side will feel that way the next day, and then nobody will believe in this democracy.

But right now, unfortunately, there is a lack of courage from the other side when it comes to defeating these lies. Down the hall, House Republicans have started to make ridiculous claims about January 6—defending the mob, blaming antifa for the attack, pretending the entire event was just a peaceful protest.

Congresswoman CHENEY, a brave woman, was literally fired for saying that Joe Biden is President—for just saying the simple fact that Joe Biden is President.

We need an independent, trusted, bipartisan Commission now more than ever. It is critically important to establish a trusted record of events and begin to restore faith in our democracy. And I think our Republican colleagues know it or at least they used to because over the last few months, a funny thing has happened. Our Senate Republican colleagues have gone from mostly supporting the idea of an independent Commission to mostly opposing one. And they can't seem to get their story straight.

Over the weekend, one Senate Republican told a national news program that it was "too early" to establish a Commission on January 6, even though more than 5 months have gone by. Another Republican Senator worried the Commission's work would end up "dragging on indefinitely."

Which is it, too early, too late? Of course, both concerns are silly. There is no justification for a waiting period, and the legislation itself includes a firm deadline for the Commission to issue a report no later than December 31 of this year.

One Republican said that he wouldn't vote for a January 6 Commission "until it was bipartisan." Of course, the legislation we are talking about